

grassland and found the uncommon weevils *Tychius stephensi* Gyll. and *Ceuthorhynchidius barnevillei* Brisout. The latter weevil was swept from yarrow, *Achillea millefolium* L., as was the leaf-beetle *Cassida prasiina* Illiger. Also on the yarrow were many chrysomelid larvae, two of which were reared out by Roger Hawkins as *Galeruca tanacetii* (L.), moulting to adult on 13 and 15 June. A dead tree in the middle of the farm was formerly a magnificent habitat for beetles, solitary wasps and nesting birds. It had been burnt out, but there David Lonsdale found the remnants of a stag beetle, *Lucanus cervus* (L.). He had previously also found the lesser stag beetle, *Dorcus parallelipipedus* (L.), at the Banqueting House. Also at Warren Farm, Andrew Halstead recorded the rare beetle *Ischnonura caerulea* (L.), found previously at this site by John Owen in 1976, and the tephritid fly *Orellia falcata* (Scop.), whose larvae mine the roots and stem-bases of goatsbeard, *Tragopogon pratensis* L. Graham Collins found the hoverfly *Pipiza luteitarsis* Zett., whose larvae feed on aphids on the foliage of elms.

A remarkable feature of this field meeting was that the majority of members attending were Hymenopterists, either wholly or in part, with sawflies, bees and wasps, ants and ichneumons all being covered. The other members were principally interested in the Coleoptera. Only Graham Collins spent part of his time looking for Lepidoptera, but it is impossible to keep a good Order down and we were fascinated by a tiny moth which was visiting the flowers of germander speedwell, *Veronica chamaedrys* L.. This turned out to be an incurvariid, *Adela fibulella* (D. & S.), and the speedwell is its host-plant. A small mining bee with red-marked abdomen, *Andrena labiata* Fab., was also feeding at the speedwell flowers. The uncommon *A. tibialis* was also present, while the familiar red mason-bee *Osmia rufa* (L.) was collecting mud from puddles.

We concluded a most enjoyable and successful meeting by retiring to the Mansion House, not a ruin but a splendid building at which functions such as wedding receptions can be held in opulent surroundings. The general public can use a small tea-room on the north side, and here we sat and relaxed and discussed the day's findings.

Much of the main body of the park is grassland managed by mowing, but recently, late cutting has been introduced in some areas in order to benefit wildlife. There are many large trees, both native and exotic, and also old hedges. In a follow-up visit on 12 August, Ian Menzies found that nymphs of the coreid bug *Gonocerus acuteangulatus* (Goeze) were numerous on hawthorns in these hedges. This bug has spread outwards from its Box Hill stronghold in recent years. He also beat a specimen of the buprestid beetle *Agrilus sinuatus* (Olivier) from these hawthorns, whose appearance suggests that this species is well-established in the park.

### Potteric Carr, South Yorkshire, 18 July 1998

Leader: **Ian Heppenstall**. A total of 7 Members and friends attended this afternoon and evening meeting at a Yorkshire Wildlife Trust wetland nature reserve and SSSI near Doncaster. It provided a rare opportunity for those resident in the Yorkshire area to enjoy one of the Society's Field Meetings. Limited recent fieldwork had indicated that the reserve could be of regional significance for both lepidoptera and odonata. Unfortunately, the weather, as with much of 1998, was scarcely ideal, a very stiff breeze keeping most insects well down during the afternoon, and only 5 common species of odonata were noted. Butterflies seen included comma *Polyommia c-album* (Linn.) and ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus* (Linn.). Otherwise recording was largely restricted to searching for leaf mines of microlepidoptera. Beating was

generally unprofitable because of the strong breeze. Thankfully, the wind had dropped by evening but under clearing skies, the temperature fell to below the seasonal norm for the night's moth trapping. Three light traps were operated in the central part of the reserve.

Notwithstanding the far from ideal weather conditions, a healthy total of 105 species of Lepidoptera were recorded, either as adults or larvae, over the meeting as a whole and some 24 of these—mostly microlepidoptera—were new to the Reserve. Although largely unexceptional, they included the following locally scarce species: *Evergestis pallidata* (Hufn.), blue-bordered carpet *Plemyria rubiganata rubiginata* (D.&S.), haworth's pug *Eupithecia haworthiata* Doubl. and dingy footman *Eilema griseola* (Hb.). *Phllonorycter heegeriella* (Zell.), *Blastobasis decolorella* (Woll.), large twin-spot carpet *Xanthorhoe quadrifasiata* (Cl.), purple thorn *Selenia tetralunaria* (Hufn.) and silky wainscot *Chilodes maritimus* (Tausch.) were perhaps the more noteworthy of the remainder.

### New Forest, Hampshire, 10 October 1998

Leader: **Tony Pickles.**—This field meeting was held to follow up last year's meeting which attempted to establish the range of *Agrochola haematidea* (Dup.), the southern chestnut, in the New Forest. Because this noctuid moth flies for a limited period, around dusk only, the meeting was convened for 17.00 hours and members were allocated sites which seemed likely to support the moth in the east of the Forest. In 1997 *haematidea* had been found to be present over the west of the Forest more or less wherever suitable conditions prevailed. The moth seemed to favour tall mature bell heather *Erica cinerea* L. growing in drier areas.

The weather was much better than in the previous year and nine members and friends met at Lyndhurst where a most persistent New Forest donkey tried to join the group. The bipeds later split into three parties, but only the members trapping on the higher ground just before Matley Passage were successful. One female *haematidea* came to their lights before 19.30 hours thus confirming its presence in the East of the Forest. Three unidentified, medium sized noctuids which could also have been of this species were observed making short low flights over the heather just before the onset of darkness at between 19.10 and 19.25.

Little can be deduced from one month, but it is notable that there is still no occasion on which the moth has been seen in numbers in the New Forest, although this seems to be frequently the case in Sussex. The bell heather in the east is predominantly not tall and mature, but is mostly present on edges of larger tracts of *Calluna* and as no more than ten per cent of the whole. It would seem encouraging that the moth can survive in areas that do not comply very closely with its preferred habitat. I would like to thank those members who attended the meeting and the Forestry Commission for their assistance.

### Homefield Wood, Medmenham, Buckinghamshire, 11 October 1998

Leader: **Ian Sims.**—Despite a rainy start to the day, by the time of the meeting the weather had cleared and the day was sunny, warm and calm: ideal conditions for searching for leaf-mining Microlepidoptera, the main quarry for this meeting so late in the season. Unfortunately, perhaps due to the inclement weather earlier in the day, no one apart from the leader attended this meeting. Not perturbed, I spent an hour or two recording before returning home. Homefield Wood is a nature reserve on the Chilterns managed by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Naturalists